

ACS NEWSLETTER

U.S. EMBASSY, Manila



We hope you each had a happy Fourth of July. It is the 232nd anniversary of our independence and we think the founders would be proud of the country they created. We have promoted peace, prosperity, and democracy around the world and have been unstintingly generous to all countries which have experienced natural disasters or that have been decimated by wars. From helping to rebuild Germany and Japan after World War II to US aid in Africa and Asia the United States has tried to “walk the talk.”

The events of the past few weeks demonstrate the friendship between the Philippines and the United States. In the aftermath of Typhoon Fengsheng (nearly 3,000,000 Filipinos displaced and 1300 Filipinos dead or missing) the United States immediately sent the USS Stockham to help with the recovery efforts pertaining to the sinking of the MV

Princess of the Stars and the USS Ronald Reagan to assist the Filipino government provide subsistence to the typhoon victims. The American people’s contribution of \$690,000 in relief supplies made a difference to 100,000s of Filipinos and their families.

So as we reflect upon recent Independence Day celebrations, let us remember that with freedom and democracy comes the responsibility to be a role model for nations around the world. Please, be active in your local communities; donate time to a local orphanage, volunteer to help teach at local schools, help with clean up projects, etc. Each of you can be an “ambassador” of the United States to your community. Remember the 4th of July isn’t just about parades, hot dogs, and fireworks – it is about 232 years of demonstrating to the world that democracy works and is worth fighting for.

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Special points of interest:

- *Passport Forms online*
- *2008 Elections*
- *Getting your affairs in order*
- *Living Wills*
- *Top 10 Airline Safety Tips*
- *Health*
- *The Philippine Islands: Olongapo City*

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July 4, 1946 Independence Day Celebration



Gen. Douglas MacArthur delivers address during the Independence Day rites at Luneta Grandstand.



Independence Day Celebration July 4, 1946



Pres. Manuel Roxas greets Gen. Douglas MacArthur on his return to the Philippines for July 4, 1946.



Passport Forms Now Available Online!

The U.S. Department of State has developed a new online passport application system that makes the process of applying for a passport or requesting additional pages easy and accurate. You don't need to worry about which form you need (it is no longer important to know the difference between a DS-11 and a DS-82), or what information goes in which box on the form. The web form will ask you a series of questions in plain English. You type in the answers, and the rest is done for you – all you need to do is print the form when you are done.



The completed form encapsulates all the data you have entered into a digital bar code that can be scanned by electronic readers at the Embassy. This ensures that the information you type in is entered quickly and accurately into the computer system that processes the application. Your privacy is also ensured, as the online passport application system does not transmit any of your information over the internet, or store any of your data once you leave the site.

To use the online passport application system, go to <https://pptform.state.gov/>.

Absentee Voting 2008

Overseas American citizens are eligible to participate in presidential and state primary elections, run-off elections and special elections that occur throughout the year, as well as the general elections in November 2008. You are strongly encouraged to register to vote and request your absentee ballot early!

Important Information About Voting Abroad – 2008 Elections

The official U.S. Government website for overseas absentee voting assistance is the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at www.fvap.gov. It has a wealth of information about absentee voting including: downloadable absentee ballot applications and write-in ballots, state-specific instructions for completing the form, links to state and local officials, and a downloadable emergency ballot to use when requested materials fail to arrive in time.

"The official U.S. Government website for overseas absentee voting assistance is the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at www.fvap.gov."

Basic Absentee Voting Process

- * Complete an application form and send it to local election officials in the U.S.
- * The local official approves your request or contacts you for further information.
- * The local official sends you an absentee ballot.
- * You vote the ballot and send it back in time to meet your

state's deadline.

Register to Vote and Request an Absentee Ballot

You may fill out the paper form available at the American Citizen Services (ACS) section of the U.S. Embassy, or download the Federal Post Card Application at <http://fvap.gov/pubs/fpca.html>. Fill it out and send it in, following the guidelines for your state.

What about my state's requirements?

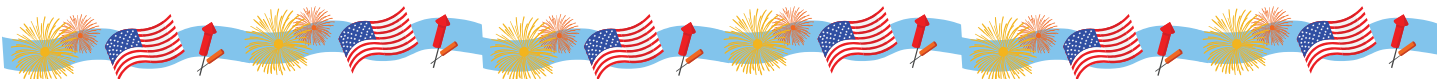
Each state establishes voting procedures, and so requirements across the country vary. It is important to be aware of your state's **deadlines for registration**. Specific information about your state's procedures and a complete 2008 election calendar are available at <http://fvap.gov>. There may be last minute changes to your state's voting calendar, procedures or deadlines. When these occur, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) will issue a News Release <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/releases.html>. To add your name to the distribution list for News Releases, send an e-mail to vote@fvap.ncr.gov.

For further information you can also contact the FVAP via
Email: vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Additional websites:

www.vote-smart.org
www.lwv.org
www.overseasvotefoundation.org
www.democratsabroad.org
www.republicansabroad.org





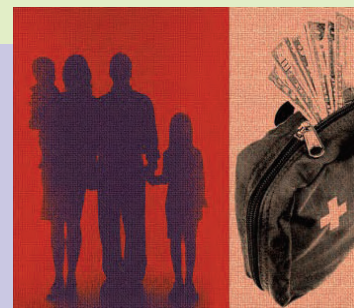
Getting Your Affairs in Order

Plan for the Future

We all need to prepare for the uncertainties of the future. Making decisions and arrangements before they are needed simplifies caring for an older person or planning for your own old age. Complete personal and financial records will have most of the details you need to plan for any changes that might come up in the years ahead—such as retirement, a move or a death in the family.

The first step is to assemble as much information as possible about you and your income and savings. A trusted family member or friend should know where you keep all these records and documents, including your will. It is not necessary to tell others what's in your will, but they should know where you keep it. If you don't have a relative or friend you trust, ask a lawyer to help. One day, you might need help managing your money or be unable to make important decisions. Helping you is much simpler for the person who steps in if all your papers are already in order.

Everyone's life history is different. So are their income, savings, debts and investments. Still, some general suggestions may help you begin to organize your important papers. You might wish to set up a file, assemble everything in a desk or dresser drawer or just list the information and the location of documents in a notebook. Review these records regularly to make sure they are up-to-date.



"We all need to prepare for the uncertainties of the future."

Personal Records

Personal records are facts, dates, names and documents that are part of your history. A personal records file should include the following information:



- full legal name
- Social Security number
- legal residence
- date and place of birth
- names and addresses of spouse and children (or location of death certificate if any are deceased)
- location of "living will" or other advance directive if one exists
- location of birth certificate and certificates of marriage, divorce and citizenship list of employers and dates of employment
- education and military records
- religious affiliation, name of church or synagogue, and names of clergy
- memberships in organizations and awards received
- requests, preferences or pre-arrangements for burial



Getting Your Affairs in Order

Financial Records

A financial records file is a place to list information about insurance policies, bank accounts, deeds, investments and other valuables. Here are some suggestions on what kind of documents should be filed:



- sources of income and assets (pension funds, IRAs, 401Ks, interest income, etc.)
- Social Security and Medicare information
- investment income (stocks, bonds, property and any brokers' names and addresses)
- insurance information (life, health and property) with policy numbers and agents'
- names bank and account numbers (checking, savings and credit union)
- location of safe deposit boxes
- copy of most recent income tax return
- liabilities—what is owed to whom and when payments are due
- mortgages and debts—how and when paid
- location of deed of trust and car title
- credit card and charge account names and numbers property taxes
- location of all personal items such as jewelry or family heirlooms

Sometimes the person helping you may have questions about a bill or a health insurance claim. They may need to talk directly with the people involved. The law does not allow this without your consent. You might consider giving permission to Medicare, a credit card company or your bank, for example, to discuss your affairs with this person. Sometimes this can be done over the telephone. Sometimes the company has a form for you to sign and return.

Legal Documents

When people think of legal documents associated with aging, they probably think of a will. A will is your chance to say who should receive the things you own. Another way to do that is a trust. Sometimes, before death, older people need other legal documents. Perhaps, someone has to take over an older person's affairs. A standard power of attorney or a durable power of attorney can give one person the right to handle personal or financial matters for another. A standard power of attorney is not useful, however, if the person being cared for cannot make his or her own decisions. A durable power of attorney may be a better choice because it is effective even if a person becomes unable to make decisions for himself.

Another type of document, an advance directive, describes in writing what your wishes about health care are in case you become terminally ill. Advance directives such as a living will or durable power of attorney for health care can help avoid family conflict. They make it easier for family members to make hard health care decisions on a relative's behalf. For example, your aunt may not wish to have her life extended by being placed on a ventilator or breathing machine, or your brother may want to be an organ donor. An advance directive can provide for this. They are recognized in most, but not all, U.S. states.

Because state laws vary, check with your area office on aging. A lawyer or financial planner can also give you further information on wills, trusts, estates, inheritance taxes, insurance, Medicare and Medicaid.

Resources

Talk to a lawyer before setting up a power of attorney, durable power of attorney, joint account, trust or guardianship. Be sure to ask about the cost before visiting a lawyer. Your local library may have a directory of local lawyers.

Free legal and financial services are often available to help older people and their families. Contact your local agency on aging or one of the following organizations.

1. *National Association of Area Agencies on Aging* (202) 872-0888; www.n4a.org
2. *National Association of State Units on Aging* Phone: (202) 898-2578 ; www.nasua.org
3. *National Institute on Aging*



Last Will and Testament

What you can't or shouldn't do in your will

Wills aren't the place to handle certain kinds of property or issues.

Wills are wonderful, simple, inexpensive ways to address many people's estate planning needs. But they can't do it all. Here are some things you *shouldn't* expect to accomplish in your will.

Leave Certain Kinds of Property

You can't use your will to leave:

- Property you hold in joint tenancy with someone else (or in "tenancy by the entirety" or "community property with right of survivorship" with your spouse). At your death, your share will automatically belong to the surviving co-owner. A will provision leaving your share would have no effect unless all co-owners died simultaneously.
- Property you've transferred to a living trust.
- Proceeds of a life insurance policy for which you've named a beneficiary.
- Money in a pension plan, individual retirement account (IRA), 401(k) plan, or other retirement plan. Instead, name the beneficiary on forms provided by the account administrator.
- Stocks or bonds held in beneficiary (transfer-on-death or TOD) form. If you want to change the beneficiary, contact the brokerage company.
- Money in a payable-on-death bank account. If you want to name a different beneficiary, just fill out a simple form at the bank.

"Wills are wonderful, simple, inexpensive ways to address many people's estate planning needs. But they can't do it all. Here are some things you shouldn't expect to accomplish in your will."

Leave Funeral Instructions

Wills are typically not read -- or even found -- until days or weeks after a death. That's too late to be of help to the people who must make immediate decisions about the disposition of a body and funeral or memorial services. Instead, make a separate document spelling out your wishes, and tell your executor where to find it when the time comes.

Reduce Estate Taxes

If you expect your estate to owe federal estate taxes, you may want to take steps now to reduce the tax liability. A will won't help you avoid taxes. Many kinds of trusts can reduce or postpone the tax bill.



Avoid Probate

Property left through a will usually must spend several months or a year tied up in probate court before it can be distributed to the people who inherit it.

Put Certain Conditions on Gifts

There are also a few legal limitations on what you can do in a will. For example, you cannot leave a gift that is contingent on the marriage, divorce, or change of religion of a recipient. You can, however, try to influence lesser matters. For example, you could leave money "to Jeremy, if and when he goes to college." Making such conditional gifts, however, usually opens a can of worms -- who will enforce the will's conditions, and for how long?

Leave Money for an Illegal Purpose

This one doesn't come up often, but you can't earmark money for something illegal, such as encouraging minors to smoke.

Arrange to Care for a Beneficiary with Special Needs

If you want to provide long-term care for someone, a will isn't the place. Far better to set up a trust that's tailored to the beneficiary's needs. See a lawyer who's an expert in the complicated laws that affect this situation.

Leave Money to Pets

Pets can't own property, so don't try to leave them any in your will. Instead, leave the animal to someone who has agreed to provide a good home -- and leave that person some money to help out with pet-related expenses. Some states allow you to set up trusts for animals, but that's probably not necessary if you have confidence in the person you've named to care for your pets after your death.



Continued from page 5... Last Will and Testament

What happens if I die without a will?

If you don't make a will or use some other legal method to transfer your property when you die, state law will determine what happens to your property. Generally, it will go to your spouse and children or, if you have neither, to your other closest relatives. If no relatives can be found to inherit your property, it will go to the state. In addition, in the absence of a will, a court will determine who will care for your young children and their property if the other parent is unavailable or unfit to do so. If you are part of an unmarried same-sex couple, your surviving partner will not inherit anything unless you live in one of the few states that allows registered domestic partners to inherit like spouses: California, Connecticut, Maine, New Jersey, and Vermont.

What makes a will legal? Do I need a lawyer to make my will?

Any adult of sound mind is entitled to make a will. Beyond that, there are just a few technical requirements a will must fulfill:

- The will must be signed by at least two witnesses. The witnesses must watch you sign the will, though they don't need to read it. Your witnesses, in most states, must be people who won't inherit anything under the will. (If your state allows "holographic" wills, you don't need witnesses.)
- You must date and sign the will.

You don't have to have your will notarized. In many states, though, if you and your witnesses sign an affidavit (sworn statement) before a notary public, you can help simplify the court procedures required to prove the validity of the will after you die.

You do not have to record or file your will with any government agency, although it can be recorded or filed in a few states. Just keep your will in a safe, accessible place and be sure the person in charge of winding up your affairs (your executor) knows where it is. A lawyer does not have to write a will, and most people do not need a lawyer's help to make a basic will -- one that leaves a home, investments, and personal items to your loved ones, and, if you have young children, that names a guardian to take care of them. Creating a basic will rarely involves complicated legal rules, and most people can create their own will with the aid of a good software program or book. But if you have questions that aren't answered by the resource you're relying on, or your situation is unusual, it may be worth it to see a good lawyer.

I don't have much property. Can't I just make a handwritten will?

Handwritten, unwitnessed wills, called "holographic" wills, are legal in about 25 states. To be valid, a holographic will must be written and signed in the handwriting of the person making the will; in some states it must also be dated. Some states allow you to use a fill-in-the-blanks form if the rest of the will is handwritten and the will is properly dated and signed.

A holographic will is better than nothing if it's valid in your state. But a will signed in front of witnesses is better. If a holographic will goes before a probate court, the court may be unusually strict when examining it to be sure it's legitimate. And if you don't have guidance -- from a good self-help resource or a good lawyer -- it's easy to write something that turns out to be ambiguous or even contrary to what you intended.

Must I leave something to my spouse and children?

Disinheriting spouses. The law protects surviving spouses from being left with nothing. If you live in a community property state (Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Washington, or Wisconsin -- or Alaska if you have made a written community property agreement), your spouse automatically owns half of all the property and earnings (with a few exceptions) acquired by either of you during your marriage. You can leave your half of the community property, and your separate property, to anyone you choose.

In all other states, a surviving spouse has a legal right to claim a portion of your estate, no matter what your will provides. But these provisions kick in only if your spouse goes to court and claims that share. If you don't plan to leave at least half of your property to your spouse, either through your will or outside it, you should consult a lawyer -- unless your spouse willingly consents in writing to your plan.

Disinheriting children.

Generally, it's perfectly legal to disinherit a child. If, however, it appears that you didn't mean to disinherit a child -- the most common example is a child born after you made your will -- then the child has the right to claim part of your property.

Can someone challenge my will after I die?

Very few wills are ever challenged in court. When they are, it's usually by a close relative who feels somehow cheated out of a share of the deceased person's property. To get an entire will invalidated, someone must go to court and prove that it suffers from a fatal flaw: the signature was forged, you weren't of sound mind when you made the will, or you were unduly influenced by someone.

FAQs



Living Wills in the U.S.



Purpose of a Living Will

A living will is not a will in the same sense as the document used for estate planning and property transfers. It is a written instruction to a person's physician about withholding or withdrawing medical treatment that will merely delay death, rather than restoring the person to a functional life. A living will *specifies how medical technology should be used* to sustain life artificially when an individual has lost competence. These instructions can also request that every life-sustaining effort be made to support life as well as to stop treatment.

Executing a Living Will

Depending on your U.S. state of residency, you may execute a living will if you are at least 18 years old, if you are a high school graduate, or if you are married. A living will by-law must be signed by two witnesses who are: (1) at least 18 years old, and (2) not the person who signed the living will on behalf of the principal or declarant. In a court contest, a living will prepared with an attorney's help will probably carry more weight than a self designed living will. The document may be signed before a notary. In many states, however, there is no requirement to have an attorney prepare a living will nor does the will need to be notarized. You may cancel or change a living will at any time. It is a good idea to destroy the original and all copies of the living will you wish to revoke or cancel.

Please be aware that Philippine hospitals may not accept living wills.

Important Actions

You may name someone to be a surrogate decision maker. That is, you may designate another person to make medical decisions, if you become incompetent or permanently unconscious. Think about people you trust, who really know your preferences, and who would be willing to act in this role if needed. Talk to this person to decide if he or she would serve as a surrogate and if he or she really understands you and your wishes. It may be that after you consider the process, you will decide not to name anyone as surrogate. You do not need to have a surrogate to execute a living will. Keep the original document where it is safe and will be accessible when needed. Have a copy in your safe deposit box. Give copies to members of your family and to your physician, attorney, and religious leader (priest, rabbi, minister, etc.). Keep these people informed of your wishes so that they know how to proceed. Request that copies of your living will and durable power of attorney be placed in your medical files. Review, redate, and resign your living will yearly, and do so at least every five years before witnesses. This forces you to reevaluate your position and your instructions about artificially prolonged life, terminal illness, or permanent unconsciousness. It also indicates to a doctor, hospital, and judge that this is your current declaration or wish.



Cancelling a Living Will

You may revoke or cancel a living will at any time and in several ways. Your mental or physical condition is not a factor in this decision. You can revoke a living will by:

- simply destroying it; by tearing up, defacing, burning, or otherwise destroying the original and all copies that you have given to others. The idea is to convey the message that you have canceled the living will.
- revoking the living will in writing with the statement signed by you or someone else at your direction.
- orally revoking the living will to the attending physician or other health care provider, or to a witness.



Living Wills in the U.S.

Continued from page 7...

Need for Discussion

People do not like to talk about becoming terminally ill, incapacitated, or dependent. But if they want to make their own health care decisions, they need to have discussions with family members and health care professionals about life-sustaining treatments. Discussion may be initiated by a spouse, parent, or an adult child. Realize that death is a touchy subject for some people. A recent accident that has left the participants severely injured, or knowledge of a comatose individual, may be used to introduce the topic of living wills. Ask: "What would you want done under those circumstances?" Indicate: "I need to talk about it." Share your feelings about your concerns. If the other person is reluctant to discuss it, don't insist, but bring up the topic at another time.

"If they want to make their own health care decisions, they need to have discussions with family members and health care professionals about life-sustaining treatments."

Definitions



Advance directive: An advance directive or declaration is a legal term for a living will, a written declaration voluntarily executed to indicate which life-sustaining medical treatments to initiate, continue, withhold, or withdraw. Living will is the terminology frequently used for advance directive.

Principal or declarant: The person making the living will.

Agent: The person(s) to whom the principal or declarant may give powers to make decisions about health and medical care.

Incompetence: The lack of sufficient capacity for a person to make or communicate decisions about him- or herself.

Attending physician: A doctor who has primary responsibility for the treatment and care of the person executing a living will.

Health care provider: A person licensed by state law to administer health care in the ordinary course of business or practice of a profession.

Life-sustaining treatment: Any medical procedure or intervention that, when administered to a patient, serves only to prolong the process of dying or to maintain the patient in a state of permanent unconsciousness. Life-sustaining treatment includes food and liquids administered by gastric tube or intravenously, or any other artificial or invasive means as specified in the individual's living will.

Permanently unconscious: A term describing an incurable and irreversible medical condition in an advanced stage that will result in death regardless of the use of life-sustaining treatment. The term applies to persons in a persistent vegetative state or irreversible coma or who are terminally ill.

Surrogate: A person legally named to make health care decisions for another person.

Terminal condition: An incurable and irreversible medical condition caused by injury, disease, or physical illness that will, in the opinion of the attending physician, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, result in death regardless of the continued application of life-sustaining treatment.



Top 10 Airline Safety Tips



Fly on Nonstop Routings

Most accidents occur during the takeoff, climb, descent, and landing phase of flight so flying nonstop would reduce exposure to these most accident prone phases of flight.



Choose Larger Aircraft

Currently, aircraft with more than 30 passenger seats were all designed and certified under the strictest regulations. Also, in the unlikely event of a serious accident, larger aircraft provide a better opportunity for passenger survival.



Pay Attention to the Preflight Briefing

Although the information seems repetitious, the locations of the closest emergency exits may be different depending on the aircraft that you fly on and seat you are in.



Keep the Overhead Storage Bin Free of Heavy Articles

Overhead storage bins may not be able to hold very heavy objects during turbulence, so if you or another passenger have trouble lifting an article into the bin, have it stored elsewhere.



Keep Your Seat Belt Fastened While You are Seated

Keeping the belt on when you are seated provides that extra protection you might need if the plane hits unexpected turbulence.



Listen to the Flight Attendants

The primary reason flight attendants are on an aircraft is for safety, so if one of them asks you to do

something like fasten your seat belts, do it first and ask questions later.



Don't Bring Any Hazardous Material

There are rather long lists of hazardous materials that are not allowed, but common sense should tell you that you shouldn't bring gasoline, corrosives, poisonous gases, and other such items on the aircraft unless they were allowed by the airline and shipped in a proper container.



Let the Flight Attendant Pour Your Hot Drinks

Flight attendants are trained to handle hot drinks like coffee or tea in a crowded aisle on a moving aircraft, so allow them to pour the drink and hand it too you.



Don't Drink Too Much

The atmosphere in an airliner cabin is pressurized to about the same altitude as Denver, so any alcohol you consume will affect you more strongly than at sea level. Moderation is a good policy at any altitude.



Keep Your Wits About You

In the unlikely event that you are involved in an emergency situation such as a precautionary emergency evacuation, follow the directions of the flight attendants and flight crew and exit the aircraft as quickly as possible.

"Most accidents occur during the takeoff, climb, descent, and landing phase of flight so flying nonstop would reduce exposure to these most accident prone phases of flight."

Source: www.airsafe.com.



HEALTHbites



Protect Your Eyes from the Sun

Balance your having “fun in the sun” with protecting yourself and your family. UV-A and UV-B rays from the sun (even through haze and clouds) and from the ultraviolet reflection off sand, snow, or pavement, tanning lights, or welding may burn the surface of the eyes. This can lead to the development of cataracts and macular degeneration.

To protect adults AND children from the ophthalmologic dangers from the sun, it is advised to wear sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of the UV-A and UV-B rays, wear wide-brimmed hats, and avoid the strongest ultraviolet rays of the sun that occur between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Applying sunscreen and wearing protective clothing will protect your skin from skin cancer, premature aging, and wrinkles.

An additional note about *melanoma*: continue to cover skin and protect the exposed skin with sunscreen even though about half of melanomas occur on normal, undamaged skin. Among men, the trunk, head, or neck are the common sites of the occurrence of melanoma; among women, the arms and legs are common sites. Any asymmetrical or multicolored mole or change in a mole's size, shape, or color should be evaluated by a clinician.

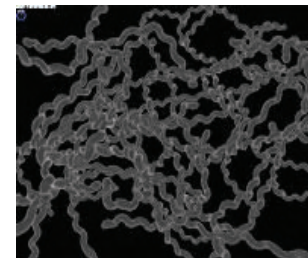


What is *Leptospirosis*?

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that affects humans and animals. It is caused by bacteria of the genus *Leptospira*. In humans it causes a wide range of symptoms, yet many who are infected are asymptomatic. Symptoms of leptospirosis include high fever, severe headache, chills, muscle aches, and vomiting. Symptoms also include jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhea, or a rash. If the disease is not treated, the patient could develop kidney damage, meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain and spinal cord), liver failure, and respiratory distress. In rare cases death occurs. Many of these symptoms can be mistaken for other diseases. Leptospirosis is confirmed by laboratory testing of a blood or urine sample.

Outbreaks of leptospirosis are usually caused by exposure to water contaminated with the urine of infected animals. Many different kinds of animals carry the bacterium; they may become sick but sometimes have no symptoms. *Leptospira* organisms have been found in cattle, pigs, horses, dogs, rodents, and wild animals. Humans become infected through contact with water, food, or soil containing urine from these infected animals. This may happen by swallowing contaminated food or water or through skin contact, especially with mucosal surfaces, such as the eyes or nose, or with broken skin. The disease is not known to be spread from person to person.

Source: www.cdc.gov



Sectional profiles of
Leptospira Interrogans



Lungsod
ng
Olongapo City

Olongapo is a highly urbanized city located in the province of Zambales, Philippines. According to the 2000 Philippine census, the city registered a population of 194,260.

LEGEND

Popular legend has it that the name OLONGAPO was derived from the phrase "ULO NG APO" or Head of the Chief. According to the legend, there once was a group of warring tribes whose people were disunited. A wise old man seeing the peril that disunity caused his people, exerted great effort toward uniting the tribes. However, there were some who resentfully opposed the old man's efforts, and one day the old man disappeared.



Following an extensive search, the old man's body was found, but with the head missing. The tribesmen sent hunters to locate the old man's severed head, but found nothing.

After weeks of searching, a boy who vowed to not stop searching, came upon the severed head resting on the tip of a bamboo pole. The boy ran shouting "ULO NG APO" around the different villages.

HISTORY

Olongapo was a small fishing village in the town of Subic. In 1884, Olongapo was occupied by the Spaniards who authorized the construction of the Arsenal in 1885. In 1898, Admiral George Dewey took Olongapo and Subic Bay during the Spanish—American war.

Olongapo was converted into a city in 1966. Once the site of the biggest U.S. naval base in Asia, Olongapo is fast developing into an industrial and tourism destination through the Subic Bay Freeport Zone under the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. Since then, its huge area, including docking facilities and an international airport are attracting foreign investors.

Tourist attractions include the Rizal Triangle, Marikit Park, Volunteers Park, SubicBay Lighthouse, Ocean Adventure, Zoobic, JEST camp, etc.

HISTORICAL SITES

Olongapo City Museum

Located in the East Tapinac sector of Olongapo, the museum houses exhibits that trace the history of Olongapo from the time of its aboriginal inhabitants. Much of the museum is devoted to dioramas that capture scenes from the time of the Aeta, but the Spanish and the American periods as well as the occupation by Japanese troops during WWII and eventual independence are also covered.

Source: http://www.hoteltravel.com/philippines/olongapo/guides/activities_sports.htm



Spanish Gate

The original fortified settlement built by the Spanish navy, which was the foundation for today's Olongapo City, is marked at its entrance by the Spanish Gate. This gate is now found inside the US naval base, and has been preserved as a symbol of Spain's dominance of Subic Bay in the late 19th century. Source: http://www.history.olongapocity.net/olongapo_city_landmark.php

Subic Bay Lighthouse

A panoramic view perfect for picture taking this old lighthouse is located along the national highway going to the north. It overlooks the Subic Bay Freeport area.





Dates of Interest



2008 U.S. Embassy Holiday Closings

Independence Day (U.S.)	Fri, July 4
Ninoy Aquino Day (PHL)	Mon, Aug 18
National Heroes Day (PHL)	Mon, Aug 25
Labor Day (U.S.)	Mon, Sept 1
Eid-ul-Fitr (PHL)	Subject to proclamation
Columbus Day (U.S.)	Mon, Oct 13
Veterans Day (U.S.)	Tues, Nov 11
Thanksgiving Day (U.S.)	Thurs, Nov 27
Bonifacio Day (PHL)	Mon, Dec 1
Christmas Day (U.S./PHL)	Thurs, Dec 25
Special non-working Day (PHL)	Fri, Dec 26
Last Day of the Year (PHL)	Wed, Dec 31

2008 Outreach Schedule

Angeles	July 17	Thursday
Olongapo	July 18	Friday
Pangasinan	August 15	Friday
Angeles	October 2	Thursday
Olongapo	October 3	Friday
Baguio	October 23	Thursday
Davao	November 7	Friday

Dates are only tentative and subject to change

American Citizen Services

U.S. Embassy

1201 Roxas Blvd.
Ermita, Manila, Philippines

Consul General: Richard D. Haynes

ACS Chief: Linda E. Daetwyler

Office: (63)(2) 301-2246 or 301-2555

Fax: (63)(2) 301-2017

Passports

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 11:00am

By phone: M-F, 2-4pm x5187

For applications: FedEx - 02-879- 4747 or

<http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Citizenship and Birth Registration

By phone: M-F, 2-4pm x5188

By appointment only for forms/applications: FedEx - 02-879-4747 or <http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Notary Services

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 10:00am

Legal Capacity to Marry

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 10:00am

Emergencies

For emergencies after hours please call (63) (2) 301-2000 and ask for the Duty Officer.

Website: <http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Email: acsinfomanila@state.gov

Virtual Consulate Davao:

<http://www.usvirtualconsulatedavao.org.ph>

Online Registration:

<https://travelregistration.state.gov>

Cebu Consular Agency

Waterfront Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City

Mon through Fri, 9:00am - 11:00am

Tel: (032) 231-1261

Fax: (032) 231-0174



Philippines Country Specific Information

The Department of State provides information to assist travelers in better understanding foreign countries they may visit and the known risks that they should consider. Travelers are encouraged to inform themselves about their country of destination prior to commencement of travel. It is the traveler's responsibility to obtain a U.S. passport from the Department of State and appropriate visas from the embassy or consulate of the country of destination. Canceling a scheduled trip abroad may cost money. When making reservations, travelers should discuss cancellation policies with their travel agent, travel insurer or airline. The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation; Medicare does not cover medical expenses abroad.

Americans planning travel to *Philippines* should read [Intercountry Adoption Philippines](#), [International Parental Child Abduction Philippines](#), [Travel Warning for Philippines](#), [Avian Flu Fact Sheet](#) and [Worldwide Caution Public Announcement](#) available on the Department of State web site at <http://travel.state.gov>

June 17, 2008

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: The Philippines is an emerging economy with a democratic system of government, located in Southeast Asia. The archipelago consists of more than 7,000 islands, of which over 800 are inhabited. The major island groupings are Luzon in the north, the Visayas in the center and Mindanao in the south. Tourist facilities are available within population centers and the main tourist areas. English is widely spoken in the Philippines, and most signs are in English. Read the Department of State [Background Notes](#) on the Philippines for additional information.

ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS: U.S. citizens may enter the Philippines without a visa upon presentation of their U.S. passport, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the Philippines, and a return ticket to the United States or an onward ticket to another country. Upon arrival immigration authorities will annotate your passport with an entry visa valid for 21 days. If you plan to stay longer than 21 days you must apply for an extension at the Philippine Bureau of Immigration and Deportation's main office at Magallanes Drive; Intramuros, Manila, Philippines or at any of its provincial offices at <http://www.immigration.gov.ph>.

Persons who overstay their visas are subject to fines and detention by Philippine immigration authorities. American citizens are urged to remain aware of their visa status while in the Philippines and to strictly follow immigration laws and regulations. Travelers departing the country from international airports must pay a Passenger Service Charge in Philippine Pesos. Visit the Embassy of the Philippines web site at <http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org> for the most current visa information.

Special requirements exist for the entry of unaccompanied minors. In an effort to prevent international child abduction, the Philippine government requires that a waiver of exclusion be obtained from a Philippine Embassy or Consulate or from the Bureau of Immigration and Detention in Manila for a child under 15 years of age who plans to enter the Philippines unaccompanied by either a parent or legal guardian prior to the child's entry into the Philippines.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the prevention of [international child abduction](#) can be found on our web site. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information](#) sheet.

SAFETY AND SECURITY: U.S. citizens contemplating travel to the Philippines should carefully consider the risks to their safety and security while there, including those due to terrorism. While travelers may encounter such threats anywhere in the Philippines, the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago are of particular concern. Travelers should exercise extreme caution in both central and western Mindanao as well as in the Sulu Archipelago.



Philippines Country Specific Information (continued)

Kidnap for ransom gangs operate in the Philippines. In October 2007, one such gang abducted a visiting U.S. citizen whose whereabouts are unknown at this time. Several other foreigners were also kidnapped for ransom in 2007. The New People's Army (NPA), a terrorist organization, operates in many rural areas of the Philippines, including in the northern island of Luzon. While it has not targeted foreigners in several years, the NPA could threaten U.S. citizens engaged in business or property management activities, and it often demands "revolutionary taxes."

Terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Jema'ah Islamiyah and groups that have broken away from the more mainstream Moro Islamic Liberation Front or Moro National Liberation Front, have carried out bombings resulting in deaths, injuries and property damage. In November 2007, a bombing outside the House of Representatives in Metro Manila resulted in a number of deaths and injuries to bystanders. On January 3, 2008, a bomb exploded at a Cotabato City disco pub, killing one and injuring eight. The central and western areas of Mindanao have also experienced bombings targeting bus terminals and public buildings. While those responsible do not appear to have targeted foreigners, travelers should remain vigilant and avoid congregating in public areas; U.S. Government employees must seek special permission for travel to Mindanao or the Sulu Archipelago. When traveling in Mindanao, U.S. official travelers attempt to lower their profile, limit their length of stay and exercise extreme caution. Some foreigners who reside in or visit western and central Mindanao hire their own private security personnel.

For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs web site at <http://travel.state.gov> where the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#), including the [Worldwide Caution](#), can be found.

Up-to-date information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States and Canada, or for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll-line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The Department of State urges American citizens to take responsibility for their own personal security while traveling overseas. For general information about appropriate measures travelers can take to protect themselves in an overseas environment, see the Department of State's pamphlet [A Safe Trip Abroad](#).

CRIME: As in many of the major metropolitan areas in the United States, crime is a significant concern in Metro Manila. As a rule of thumb, Americans should exercise good judgment and remain aware of their surroundings. Reports of confidence games, pick pocketing, internet scams and credit card fraud are common. Be wary of unknown individuals who attempt to befriend you, especially just after you arrive in country. A number of robberies and assaults involving the "date rape drug" (known locally as Ativan) have occurred; the drug is generally administered to unwitting male or female victims via food or drink. It is best not to accept food, drink, or rides in private vehicles from strangers, even if they appear legitimate. While Americans are not typically targeted for kidnapping, kidnappings and violent assaults do occur in the Metro Manila area.

Taxis are the recommended form of public transportation. However, the following safeguards are important: do not enter a taxi if it has already accepted another passenger; and request that the meter be used. If the driver is unwilling to comply with your requests, it is best to wait for another cab. It is also a good idea to make a mental note of the license plate number should there be a problem. When driving in the city, make certain that the doors are locked and the windows rolled up. All other forms of public transportation, such as the light rail system, buses and "jeepneys" should be avoided for both safety and security reasons.

Visitors should also be vigilant when using credit cards. One common form of credit card fraud involves the illicit use of an electronic device to retrieve and record information, including the PIN, from the card's magnetic strip. The information is then used to make unauthorized purchases. To limit your vulnerability to this scam, never let your card out of your sight.





Philippines Country Specific Information (continued)

A continuing problem is the commercial scam or sting that attempts to sell or to seek negotiation of fraudulent U.S. securities. Visitors and residents should be wary when presented with supposed Federal Reserve Notes or U.S. securities for sale or negotiation. For further information, consult the Federal Reserve System's web site at <http://www.federalreserve.gov/>.

In many countries around the world, counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. Transactions involving such products may be illegal under local law. In addition, bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines. More information on this serious problem is available at <http://www.cybercrime.gov/18usc2320.htm>.

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME: The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. If you are the victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to local police, please contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance. The Embassy/Consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed. The Philippines has a victim compensation program to provide financial compensation to victims of violent or personal crime and of unjust imprisonment. Information may be obtained from the Philippine Department of Justice at 011-632-536-0447 or via the Internet at <http://www.doj.gov.ph/>.

The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in the Philippines is: 117.

See our information on [Victims of Crime](#).

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Adequate medical care is available in major cities in the Philippines, but even the best hospitals may not meet the standards of medical care, sanitation, and facilities provided by hospitals and doctors in the United States. Medical care is limited in rural and more remote areas.

Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost several or even tens of thousands of dollars. Most hospitals will require a down payment of estimated fees in cash at the time of admission. In some cases, public and private hospitals have withheld lifesaving medicines and treatments for non-payment of bills. Hospitals also frequently refuse to discharge patients or release important medical documents until the bill has been paid in full. A list of doctors and medical facilities in the Philippines is available on the web page of the U.S. Embassy in Manila at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/>.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or via the CDC's web site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>. Tuberculosis is an increasingly serious health concern in the Philippines. For further information, please consult the CDC's Travel Notice on TB, <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-TB.aspx>.

For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's (WHO) web site at <http://www.who.int/en>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/ith/en>.

MEDICAL INSURANCE: The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. Please see our information on [medical insurance overseas](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in a foreign country, U.S. citizens may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. The information below concerning the Philippines is provided for general reference only, and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.



Philippines Country Specific Information (continued)

Travel within the Philippine archipelago is possible by boat, plane, bus or car. Few tourists rent cars to drive, as the road system is crowded and drivers are undisciplined. Driving off the national highways and paved roads is particularly dangerous, especially at night, and should be avoided. To avoid overcrowded or unsafe transport, exercise caution in planning travel by older, inter-island ferryboats, or other public conveyances.

For specific information concerning Philippine driver's permits, vehicle inspection, road tax and mandatory insurance, please contact the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C. at tel. (202) 467-9300 or one of the Philippine consulates in the United State (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco) or via the Internet at <http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/home.htm>. Please see also related information from the Philippine Department of Tourism at <http://www.tourism.gov.ph> and <http://www.dotpcvc.gov.ph>.

Please refer to our [Road Safety](#) page for more information. Visit the web site of the country's national tourist office and national authority responsible for road safety at <http://www.lto.gov.ph/>.

AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the Government of the Philippines' Civil Aviation Authority as not being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for the oversight of the Philippines' air carrier operations. For more information, travelers may visit the FAA's web site at http://www.faa.gov/safety/programs_initiatives/oversight/iasa.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Marriage in the Philippines: The Philippine Government requires foreigners who wish to marry in the Philippines to obtain from the U.S. Embassy a "Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage" before filing an application for a marriage license. Because there is no national register of marriages in the United States, the U.S. Embassy cannot provide such a certification. As a result, the Philippine Government will accept an "Affidavit in Lieu of a Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage" in its place. Americans may execute this affidavit at the U.S. Embassy in Manila Monday-Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., except for Philippine or American holidays. The American must present his/her U.S. passport. There is a fee of \$30.00 or its peso equivalent for the affidavit. Philippine authorities will not accept any substitute document issued in the United States. Before traveling to the Philippines to be married, U.S. military personnel should contact their personnel office regarding Department of Defense joint service regulations.

Execution of the affidavit by a U.S. consular officer is a notarial act, and the consular officer is authorized by U.S. law to refuse to perform the service if the document will be used for a purpose patently unlawful, improper, or inimical to the best interests of the United States (see 22 C.F.R. section 92.9b). Entering into a marriage contract for the principal purpose of facilitating immigration to the United States for an alien is an unlawful act, and the U.S. Code provides penalties for individuals who commit perjury in an affidavit taken by a consular officer. Relationship fraud is a persistent problem in the Philippines, and it is not uncommon for Filipinos to enter into marriages with Americans solely for immigration purposes. Relationships developed via correspondence, particularly those begun on the Internet, are particularly susceptible to manipulation.

The Marriage Application Process: Once an American citizen has obtained from the U.S. Embassy an "Affidavit in Lieu of a Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage," he/she may file an application for a marriage license at the office of the Philippine Civil Registrar in the town or city where one of the parties is a resident. The U.S. citizen applicant must present: (a) the affidavit; (b) divorce decree(s) or death certificate(s), if applicable (required to verify civil status and legal capacity to contract marriage); (c) his/her U.S. passport; and (d) documentation regarding parental consent or advice, if applicable. (Persons aged 18 to 21 must have written parental consent to marry in the Philippines; those aged 22 to 24 must have received parental advice. Philippine law prohibits marriage for persons under the age of 18.) A judge, a minister, or other person authorized by the Philippine Government can perform the marriage.

Marriage to a U.S. citizen confers neither citizenship nor an automatic eligibility for entry to the United States. A foreign spouse requires an immigrant visa to live in the United States. Questions about filing a petition to bring a foreign spouse to the United States may be directed to the nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service office, to the





Philippines Country Specific Information (continued)

U.S. Department of State's Visa Office (telephone: (202) 663-1225) or, while in the Philippines, to the U.S. Embassy's Immigrant Visa Unit at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/>.

Disaster Preparedness: The Philippines is a volcano-, typhoon- and earthquake-prone country. From May to December, typhoons and flash floods often occur. Flooding can cause road delays and cut off bridges. Typhoons in the vicinity of the Philippines can interrupt air and sea links within the country. Updated information on typhoons is available at <http://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph>. Volcanic activity is frequent, and periodically the Philippine Government announces alerts for specific volcanoes. Updated information on volcanoes in the Philippines is available at <http://volcanoes.usgs.gov>. Earthquakes can also occur throughout the country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the Philippines National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) at <http://ndcc.gov.ph/home/> and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

Customs: Philippine customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from the Philippines of items such as firearms and currency. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the Philippines in Washington, DC or one of the Philippine consulates in the United States (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco) for specific information regarding customs requirements. Counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available in the Philippines; transactions involving such products are illegal and bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines.

Please see our [Customs Information](#).

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While in a foreign country, a U.S. citizen is subject to that country's laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating the Philippines' laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in the Philippines are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime, prosecutable in the United States. Please see our information on [Criminal Penalties](#).

CHILDREN'S ISSUES: For information see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).

REGISTRATION / EMBASSY LOCATION: Americans living or traveling in the Philippines are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the [State Department's travel registration web site](#) so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security within the Philippines. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. (63) (2) 301-2000. The American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is (63) (2) 301-2017 and the ACS web page is at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/>.

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This replaces the Country Specific Information for the Philippines dated January 17, 2008 to update sections on "Country Description," "Safety and Security," "Crime" and "Medical Facilities and Health Information."



Travel Warning

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

PHILIPPINES

February 13, 2008

This Travel Warning updates information on the security situation and reminds Americans of the risks of travel in the Philippines . This Travel Warning supersedes the Travel Warning for the Philippines issued April 27, 2007.

U.S. citizens contemplating travel to the Philippines should carefully consider the risks to their safety and security while there, including those due to terrorism. While travelers may encounter such threats anywhere in the Philippines , the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago are of particular concern. Travelers should exercise extreme caution in both central and western Mindanao as well as in the Sulu Archipelago.

Kidnap for ransom gangs operate in the Philippines . In October 2007, one such gang abducted a visiting U.S. citizen whose whereabouts are unknown at this time. Several other foreigners were also kidnapped for ransom in 2007. The New People's Army (NPA), a terrorist organization, operates in many rural areas of the Philippines , including in the northern island of Luzon . While it has not targeted foreigners in several years, the NPA could threaten U.S. citizens engaged in business or property management activities, and it often demands "revolutionary taxes."

Terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Jema'ah Islamiyah, and groups that have broken away from the more mainstream Moro Islamic Liberation Front or Moro National Liberation Front, have carried out bombings resulting in deaths, injuries and property damage. On January 3, 2008, a bomb exploded at a Cotabato City disco pub, killing one and injuring eight. The central and western areas of Mindanao have also experienced bombings targeting bus terminals and public buildings. While those responsible do not appear to have targeted foreigners, travelers should remain vigilant and avoid congregating in public areas; a recent bombing outside the House of Representatives in Metro Manila resulted in a number of deaths and injuries to bystanders.

U.S. Government employees must seek special permission for travel to Mindanao or the Sulu Archipelago. When traveling in Mindanao , U.S. official travelers attempt to lower their profile, limit their length of stay, and exercise extreme caution. Some foreigners who reside in or visit western and central Mindanao hire their own security.

The Department strongly encourages Americans in the Philippines to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manila through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard , Manila , Philippines , tel. 63-2-301-2000. The American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is 63-2-301-2017 and the ACS web page is at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/www3004.html>.

For information on general crime and security issues, U.S. citizens should also consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information for the Philippines and the Worldwide Caution, located at <http://travel.state.gov/>. American citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 from the United States and Canada , or 202-501-4444 from overseas.

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Worldwide Caution

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

July 16, 2008

This Worldwide Caution updates information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against Americans and interests throughout the world. In some countries, the rise in oil and food prices has caused political and economic instability and social unrest. American citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This supersedes the Worldwide Caution dated January 17, 2008.

The Department of State remains concerned about the continued threat of terrorist attacks, demonstrations and other violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests overseas. Current information suggests that al-Qaida and affiliated organizations continue to plan terrorist attacks against U.S. interests in multiple regions, including Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. These attacks may employ a wide variety of tactics including suicide operations, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings and bombings.

Extremists may elect to use conventional or non-conventional weapons, and target both official and private interests. Examples of such targets include high-profile sporting events, residential areas, business offices, hotels, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, public areas and locales where Americans gather in large numbers, including during holidays. A July 9, 2008 terrorist attack on Turkish police guarding the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul killed three police officers and wounded other police personnel. On March 15, a bomb was detonated at an Italian restaurant in Islamabad, killing two and injuring twelve, including five Americans. Also on March 15, two bombs exploded at the CS Pattani Hotel in southern Thailand killing two and injuring thirteen. In January, a bomb in a disco pub in the Philippines killed one and injured eight.

Americans are reminded of the potential for terrorists to attack public transportation systems. Recent examples include multiple anti-personnel mine detonations on passenger buses in June 2008 in Sri Lanka, multiple terrorist attacks on trains in India in 2006, the July 2005 London Underground bombings, and the March 2004 train attacks in Madrid. Extremists may also select aviation and maritime services as possible targets, such as the August 2006 plot against aircraft in London, or the December 2006 bomb at Madrid's Barajas International Airport. In June 2007, a vehicle was driven into the main terminal at Glasgow International Airport and burst into flames, but the bomb failed to detonate.

The Middle East and North Africa

Credible information indicates terrorist groups seek to continue attacks against U.S. interests in the Middle East and North Africa. Terrorist actions may include bombings, hijackings, hostage taking, kidnappings, and assassinations. While conventional weapons such as explosive devices are a more immediate threat in many areas, use of non-conventional weapons, including chemical or biological agents, must be considered a possible threat. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists and their sympathizers to seek softer targets such as public transportation, residential areas, and public areas where people congregate, including restaurants, hotels, clubs, and shopping areas.



Worldwide Caution

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

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On March 18, 2008, a mortar attack on the U.S. Embassy in Yemen injured several Yemeni citizens in the vicinity. On January 15, a roadside explosion in Beirut, Lebanon damaged a U.S. Embassy vehicle, killing three Lebanese and injuring an American citizen. On December 11, 2007, two vehicle-borne explosive devices were detonated at the UN headquarters in Algiers and the Algerian Constitutional Council. Three suicide bomb attacks in July and September of 2007 in Algeria killed more than 80 people. In July 2007, suspected al-Qaida operatives carried out a vehicle-borne explosive device attack on tourists at the Bilquis Temple in Yemen, killing eight Spanish tourists and their two Yemeni drivers. There was a series of bombings in Morocco in March and April 2007, two of which occurred simultaneously outside the U.S. Consulate General and the private American Language Center in Casablanca. Additionally, an attack took place on the American International School in Gaza in April 2007. These events underscore the intent of terrorist entities to target facilities perceived to cater to Westerners. The September 2006 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Syria and the March 2006 bombing near the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan illustrate the continuing desire of extremists to strike American targets.

Potential targets are not limited to those companies or establishments with overt U.S. ties. For instance, terrorists may target movie theaters, liquor stores, bars, casinos, or any similar type of establishment, regardless of whether they are owned and operated by host country nationals. Due to varying degrees of security at all such locations, Americans should be particularly vigilant when visiting these establishments.

The violence in Iraq, clashes between Palestinians and Israelis, and clashes between terrorist extremists and the Lebanese Armed Forces have the potential to produce demonstrations and unrest throughout the region. Americans are reminded that demonstrations and rioting can occur with little or no warning. In addition, the Department of State continues to warn of the possibility for violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests in the region. Anti-American violence could include possible terrorist actions against aviation, ground transportation, and maritime interests, specifically in the Middle East, including the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa.

The Department is concerned that extremists may be planning to carry out attacks against Westerners and oil workers on the Arabian Peninsula. Armed attacks targeting foreign nationals in Saudi Arabia that resulted in many deaths and injuries, including U.S. citizens, appear to have been preceded by extensive surveillance. Tourist destinations in Egypt that are frequented by Westerners were attacked in April 2006 resulting in many deaths and injuries, including Americans. Extremists may be surveilling Westerners, particularly at hotels, housing areas, and rental car facilities. Potential targets may include U.S. contractors, particularly those related to military interests. Financial or economic venues of value also could be considered as possible targets; the failed attack on the Abqaiq oil processing facility in Saudi Arabia in late February 2006 and the September 2006 attack on oil facilities in Yemen are examples.

East Africa

A number of al-Qaida operatives and other extremists are believed to be operating in and around East Africa.

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Worldwide Caution

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

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As a result of the conflict in Somalia, some of these individuals may seek to relocate elsewhere in the region. Americans considering travel to the region and those already there should review their plans carefully, remain vigilant with regard to their personal security, and exercise caution. Terrorist actions may include suicide operations, bombings, kidnappings or targeting maritime vessels. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists to seek softer targets such as hotels, beach resorts, prominent public places, and landmarks. In particular, terrorists and likeminded extremists may target international aid workers, civil aviation and seaports in various locations throughout East Africa, including Somalia. Americans in remote areas or border regions where military or police authority is limited or non-existent could also become targets.

Americans considering travel by sea near the Horn of Africa or in the southern Red Sea should exercise extreme caution, as there have been several incidents of armed attacks, robberies, and kidnappings for ransom at sea by pirates during the past several years. Merchant vessels continue to be hijacked in Somali territorial waters, while others have been hijacked as far as 300 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia in international waters.

The U.S. Government maritime authorities advise mariners to avoid the port of Mogadishu, and to remain at least 200 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia. In addition, when transiting around the Horn of Africa or in the Red Sea, it is strongly recommended that vessels travel in convoys, and maintain good communications contact at all times.

South and Central Asia

The U.S. Government continues to receive information that terrorist groups in South and Central Asia may be planning attacks in the region, possibly against U.S. Government facilities, American citizens, or American interests. The presence of al-Qaida, Taliban elements, indigenous sectarian groups, and other terror organizations, many of which are on the U.S. Government's list of foreign terror organizations, poses a potential danger to American citizens in the region. Continuing tensions in the Middle East may also increase the threat of anti-Western or anti-American violence in the region.

Terrorists and their sympathizers have demonstrated their willingness and capability to attack targets where Americans or Westerners are known to congregate or visit. Their actions may include, but are not limited to, vehicle-borne explosives, improvised explosive devices, assassinations, carjackings, rocket attacks, assaults or kidnappings. On June 2, 2008, a large bomb exploded in front of the Danish Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan killing at least six people and wounding nearly 20. In May 2008, a series of coordinated bombings occurred in market and temple areas of the tourist city of Jaipur in Rajasthan, India. In Afghanistan, kidnappings and terrorist attacks on international organizations, international aid workers, and foreign interests continue. In Sri Lanka, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other groups have conducted suicide bombings at political rallies, government buildings, and major economic targets, and in recent months have increasingly targeted public transportation. Although there is no indication that American citizens were targeted in these





Worldwide Caution

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attacks, and none were injured, there is a heightened risk of American citizens being victims of violence by being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Previous terrorist attacks conducted in Central Asia have involved improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers and have targeted public areas, such as markets, local government facilities, and, in 2004, the U.S. and Israeli Embassies in Uzbekistan. In addition, hostage-takings and skirmishes have occurred near the Uzbek-Tajik-Kyrgyz border areas.

Before You Go

U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration web site at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, be aware of local events, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. For additional information, please refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" found at <http://travel.state.gov>.

U.S. Government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert. These facilities may temporarily close or periodically suspend public services to assess their security posture. In those instances, U.S. embassies and consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. Americans abroad are urged to monitor the local news and maintain contact with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

As the Department continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its Consular Information Program documents, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada or, outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, Eastern Time (except U.S. federal holidays.)

